

November 16, 2015

Governor Dennis Daugaard
Office of the Governor
500 East Capitol
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Governor Daugaard:

The State-Tribal Relations Committee of the South Dakota Legislature would like to request a truth and reconciliation commission be established for the purpose of studying race relations in South Dakota. The commission would make recommendations for improving relations in the spirit of Governor Mickelson's 1990 "Year of Reconciliation" proclamation. The purpose of the commission is to promote understanding, cooperation, and awareness.

The truth and reconciliation concept, used extensively in Africa and South America, has developed into an effective strategy for dealing with human rights abuses. The truth and reconciliation process seeks to heal relations between opposing sides by distinguishing truth, and allowing for acknowledgement, forgiveness and healing. More broadly, the committee hopes that if South Dakotans have more knowledge of indigenous history and culture, and understanding of past conflict, resentment, and tensions.

Thank you for your consideration. Your attention on this matter is greatly appreciated. Please advise the State-Tribal Committee regarding any action that may be planned in the near future.

Sincerely,

Senator Troy Heinert
Chair, State-Tribal Relations Committee